

Hawai'i Coalition for Dads

Hawai'i Dads (Makua kàne)

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Read To Me International

\$1.5 million fatherhood grant awarded to Hawai'i agency

Read To Me International has been awarded a \$250,000/year, 5-year federal fatherhood strengthening grant to work with father-inmates on the Mainland through its Read To Me Prison Literacy Program.

The project will engage father-inmates housed in contracted private correctional institutions in Florence, Arizona who have children between two and 10 years of age.

Father-inmates will be encouraged to keep connected with their children during their incarceration.

The project will include: positive and active parenting instruction; group mentoring sessions; information on the importance of reading aloud to children; instruction on the selection of age-appropriate quality children's literature; opportunities for visits with children through video conferencing; and letter writing to children.

Hawai'i has been relocating its inmates to out-of-state contract prisons since 1995. Ten years ago, 300 Hawai'i inmates were sent to Texas. Currently 1,750 of the 1,900 inmates housed in out-of-state contracted facilities are male felons, so greater numbers of father-inmates are separated from their children and families. The trend is expected to continue.

Read To Me International's Prison Literacy Program in Hawai'i works with inmate-parents or grandparents of school-age children to select books for their children, write personalized notes on the inside of the book covers, and record the stories onto cassette tapes. Both the tapes and books are then mailed to the children.

For more information on this fatherhood grant, contact Liane Akana @ Read To Me International, 808/955-7600; liane@readtomeintl.org; or www.readtomeintl.org.

~HI Dads~

From the Hawai'i State Capitol to Honolulu Hale

Men's March Against Violence

The Hawai'i Coalition for Dads carried its banners and walked in the 10th Annual Men's March Against Violence on Thursday, October 19, 2006, starting at noon at the Kekaulike Plaza in Chinatown and ending with a rally at Honolulu Hale. At the rally, various individuals spoke to increase awareness about the problem of domestic abuse in the overall context of the pervasiveness of violent toys, video games, television shows, and the reduced use of diplomacy in our country's international relations.

Sponsored by Catholic Charities since 1995, men, women, and children have marched, rallied, and spoken out to put an end to domestic violence by asking everyone to be part of the solution.

~HI Dads~

State Commission on Fatherhood

PACT receives 2006 Parent Friendly Business Awards

State Commission on Fatherhood presented the Hawai'i State Legislature's 2006 Parent Friendly Business Award to **Parents And Children Together (PACT)** for its policies, benefits, and daily operation designed to carry out one of PACT's guiding values: "to create a work environment that is fulfilling and supportive."

PACT received the award at special Children and Youth Month luncheon awards ceremonies at Washington Place on October 28, 2006 in Honolulu.

~HI Dads~

*How was school today?***Ten ways for fathers to get their kids to talk**

“Hi buddy, how was school today?”

“Fine,” my son offered unenthusiastically.

We’d been here before, and I knew enough not to push any further. For the moment, I’d have to visualize what “fine” might look like.

There are times for all parents when getting information from your kids is challenging, but for fathers the challenge is often greater.

Many fathers don’t share emotions with their kids the way their mothers do, and many fathers struggle to support and listen to their kids, wanting to give advice instead.

For those fathers looking to connect with their kids, here are ten ways for them to get their kids to open up and talk with them:

1. **Don’t try so hard to get them to talk.** The harder you try to get them to talk, the more they’ll resist you. When you relax the pressure a bit, they’ll sense it, and be more ready to talk.
2. **Slow down your own life and be available.** Kids have a keen sense of how busy you are. If you’re providing enough down time for you and your kids, they’ll be more likely to feel comfortable talking to you.
3. **Engage in a physical activity that they enjoy.** Some kids are more comfortable when they’re moving, especially boys. Shooting baskets, playing soccer, or a game of catch may have your child chattering away. Moving the body can serve to move the mouth as well!
4. **Share your own life with them, and be as non-judgmental as possible.** Many fathers don’t share much of their lives with their kids. If you don’t share your own life, they’ll feel less safety in sharing theirs. And, if your kids feel they won’t be judged when they talk with you, they’ll have no reason to hold back.
5. **Use open-ended questions.** Questions that begin with “why” tend to create defensiveness, and yes or no questions won’t get much of a response. Learn to use questions that stimulate conversation. “What did you notice about that picture?” works better than, “Did you like that picture?”
6. **Use the car as a place for conversation—don’t let them escape!** You’ve got them and they can’t get out! Don’t allow video games or music to interfere with your opportunity to talk with them. Far too many kids can “tune in” today rather than becoming more connected to their parents.
7. **Reflect back what you hear from them.** It’s still the best way for your kids to feel heard, and the best way to encourage them to expand on the subject.
8. **Talk to them while they’re coloring, painting, or drawing.** Using these activities to allow your kids to express themselves can help them communicate to you as well. Joining in on the activity yourself can produce an even greater sense of connection and sharing.
9. **Provide opportunities for fun and excitement.** When your kids are doing something they love to do, they’ll want to share it with you. Provide these for your kids, and listen to them talk about it afterward.
10. **Be a parent, but be a friend as well.** While you must be a parent first, being a friend to your kids will help them to want to share with you. Don’t overdo the strict parental stuff.

From *Dads Don't Fix Your Kids* (www.markbrandenburg.com).

~HI Dads~

Remember to schedule...

Couple Time

Your children will always need your time and attention. It may be hard to find time with your partner, but it's important to make time for each other. Spend some of this time relaxing and talking openly to each other about what makes you happy and what is bothering you.

Here are some suggestions many couples have found useful:

- **SET UP A DATE** - Set aside some time (or times) each week when you can be together without interruptions.
- **USE "I" MESSAGES** - Say how you are feeling without blaming someone else. Make sure you put yourself in your communication. Say "I feel..." not "You make me feel..." Avoid using the words "always" and "never." Instead of saying "You always put me down," say "I feel put down when..." By using "I" messages, your partner is less likely to feel blamed or threatened.
- **BE DIRECT AND SPECIFIC** - Say what you mean. Don't expect your partner to be able to guess or read your mind about what is bothering you. Instead of saying "The living room has been looking messy lately," say "I get upset when papers and magazines are left laying around in the living room." Instead of saying "I get tired of always cooking (doing the dishes)," say "It would help me if you could cook (do the dishes) each night."
- **AVOID THE QUESTION TRAP** - Questions can be accusing. Instead of asking "Why didn't you call to tell me you'd be late?" say "I was worried that something had happened to you when you didn't come home at the usual time. Next time, please call me so I won't worry."
- **BE SURE TO LISTEN** - Look at your partner and really listen to what he/she is saying, even if it's a complaint. Give your partner a chance to air feelings and gripes. Don't interrupt, jump to conclusions, think about what you'll say in response, or preach. Repeat back to your partner what he/she said to make sure you really understood what they said. You can say, "Let me see if I understand what you said. Are you saying that...?"
- **COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER** - End your couple time together on a positive note. Freely and honestly praise each other for things you've done right or that have made each of you happy. Honestly and lovingly praising each other every day will strengthen your relationship and help you through some of those demanding times with your children.



A counselor can help you practice better communication techniques. You don't have to wait for a crisis before seeking help. With the added demands of your children, it may be hard to find time with your partner. As difficult as it may be, it's important to make time for each other.

Couple Time is adapted from "Take Care of Yourself," page 38 in the Hawai'i Department of Health's *Keiki o Hawai'i* booklet (at: www.theparentline.org/keiki.htm).

~HI Dads~

East Hawai'i, Kauai, Maui, Molokai, Oahu, West Hawai'i**Divorce Mediation in Hawai'i**

If you want to have more control over the outcome of your divorce and contain the cost of your divorce proceeding, mediation services at mediation centers throughout Hawai'i may be right for you.

Mediation centers in Hawai'i can handle many issues arising in divorces, including:

- **Children** (parenting time/"visitation" or "custody")—how much time the children spend with each parent; how holidays, vacations, and special days will be shared; how transportation will be handled; and how to deal with schedule changes.
- **Property**—whether the house will be kept or sold; who will live in the house if it is not sold, or until the sale; how to divide or sell personal belongings; and how debts incurred during the marriage will be handled.
- **Major decisions for the children**—schooling, medical care and religious training.
- **Other issues** which concern or arise out of the family relationship.

Mediation is FREE. However, a filing fee of \$50 per party for each 3-hour mediation session, is charged to manage the case. Mediators are trained volunteers. Public and private funding allows mediation centers to charge only a small filing fee. Although these centers are not part of the court system, many judges and family attorneys recommend mediation to their clients and refer them to mediation centers.

To start mediation, call your local mediation center (*see phone numbers below*). Be prepared to describe the issues you want to talk about and provide the name and contact phone number of your spouse. Center staff will then contact your spouse and ask if they would be willing to come to the center for mediation. If both of you agree to mediation, a mutually agreeable appointment time will be scheduled.

You can usually set your first appointment within two weeks—check with your local mediation center (see contact information below). But, if you have an upcoming court date, the mediation center staff will try to meet your needs. Mediation centers are usually open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. However, mediations can be scheduled in the evening and Saturday morning to accommodate your schedule.

Divorce mediation usually takes at least two or three meetings of 2-3 hours each. The parties normally meet with a team of two mediators—a man and a woman. Everything said in the mediation session is confidential. If the parties come to an agreement, it is written up in plain language and parties can have it reviewed by their attorneys before signing. If the parties don't have an attorney, the agreement can be given to the judge when you go to court.

Why mediation?

Mediation is a way for divorcing couples to talk together and work through divorce issues with the help of a neutral third party, the mediator. It allows people to work out their own agreements to present to the court rather than waiting for a judge to decide everything at trial.

Mediators do not "take sides," issue decisions, or promote solutions. Instead, they work with the parties to establish communication and allow the parties themselves to come up with their own ideas, plans, solutions and arrangements for themselves and their children.

Mediation is not counseling and does not try to change people's ideas about getting divorced. Mediators will not offer legal advice or tell parties what to do in any way. Mediation is often useful even if you have an attorney representing you in your divorce case. In fact, many attorneys recommend mediation to their clients and refer them to mediation centers.

What are the outcomes of mediation?

Most parties who decide to mediate are able to come to an agreement on some or all of their issues. Also, many people believe that mediation works better than the court system in helping divorcing parties feel better about each other, enables them to communicate more effectively, and helps them work together in the future on issues concerning their children and other affairs.

For more information on the services of your local mediation center call: Hilo/Hawai'i—935-7844; Kauai—245-4077; Maui—244-5744; Molokai—553-3844; Oahu—521-6767; or West Hawai'i—885-5525.

Hawaii Association for the Education of Young Children (HAEYC)**2006 HAEYC Men in Education Network (M.E.N.) Retreat**

Twelve men attended the 2nd HAEYC Men in Education Network (M.E.N.) Retreat on Saturday, August 26, 2006. at the Punanaleo o Wai'anae, a Hawaiian "language nest" preschool located along the west coast of the island of Oahu.

Children in Punanaleo early childhood programs are immersed in the Hawaiian language and culture, and for much of the day so were the men who participated. They were also immersed in food. The 'ono (delicious) Hawaiian cuisine lunch included kalua pig and cabbage, lomi-lomi salmon, lau-lau, and rice.

Kumu (teacher) **Iokepa Badis** shared how Punanaleo o Wai'anae staff and preschool ohana work to connect the language-rich curriculum, culturally appropriate materials, and Hawaiian values in support of the clear and focused vision: E Ola Ka 'Ōlelo Hawaii—"The Hawaiian language shall live." Master Kumu **Nailima Gaison** from the Island of Hawai'i shared how the Hawaiian language nest programs assist native Hawaiians and other indigenous people worldwide who share their quest to maintain and develop traditional languages and cultures for life today.



Malcolm Hee shared the findings of his doctoral research on the needs of male teachers in early childhood education (ECE). **Roberto Reggio** presented his method for using rhythm to help children discover their "reading voice." A notable voice on our "Beyond Daddy Day Care" discussion panel was **Michael Robinson**—himself a family home care professional.

These men who work directly with young children made the 2006 HAEYC M.E.N. Retreat a resounding success. One young man decided to stay past his planned mid-day departure because he was so moved by the learning and camaraderie he was experiencing.

"What stood out the most for me was the abundant and robust shared male laughter: a sound rarely heard in most early childhood professional settings," observed M.E.N. Retreat organizer **Don Piburn**. For a more extensive report on the 2006 HAEYC M.E.N. Retreat go to www.menteach.org/pages/blogreports/index.html.

~HI Dads~

Support the Hawai'i Coalition for Dads.

Help promote involved, nurturing, responsible fatherhood in Hawai'i.

☐ Please keep me informed about the activities of the Hawai'i Coalition for Dads.

☐ I would like to volunteer to help; contact me.

☐ Here is my contribution. \$ _____

~ Your donations are tax-deductible. ~

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please make your check payable to: **Hawai'i Coalition for Dads/PACT**

...and send it to: 1485 Linapuni St. #105

Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819

Phone: 841-2245

E-mail: HawaiiDads@pacthawaii.org

Hawai'i Coalition for Dads

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GOALS:

1. To increase community awareness about fatherhood.
2. To promote the availability and accessibility of quality, father-centered community resources.
3. To advocate for informed public policy regarding fatherhood.
4. To strengthen community collaboration in support of fatherhood.
5. To respect and honor everyone's unique role in children's lives.

The Hawai'i Coalition for Dads, with funding from the HMSA Foundation under the umbrella of Parents And Children Together (PACT), is a group of individuals and organizations (including *Alu Like, eventions, inc., Family Support Services of West Hawai'i, Good Beginnings Alliance, Head Start agencies, Kamehameha Schools, Kathy's Parenting Solutions, Mediation Center of Molokai, PACT Hana Like Home Visitor Program, PARENTS, Navy Fleet & Family Support Center, State Commission on Fatherhood, and The Institute For Family Enrichment*) that shares information about services to fathers and promotes involved, nurturing, responsible fatherhood.

Fatherhood & Family Resources

1. **Hilo**: Hawaii Island YWCA (Healthy Start) (961-3877)
2. **Kailua-Kona**: Family Support Services of West Hawai'i (326-7778; fsswh.org)
3. **Kaua'i**: Nana's Place/Child and Family Service (338-0252; cfs-hawaii.org)
4. **Maui**: Maui Economic Opportunity (Head Start; BEST Reintegration Program (249-2990; meo.org))
5. **Molokai**: Mediation Center of Molokai (553-3844)
- Oahu (and statewide):**
6. TIFFE (Nurturing Fathers; Playgroups) (596-8433; tiffe.org)
7. PACT (Family Centers; Hana Like; Head Start; Family Peace Center) (847-3285; pacthawaii.org)
8. Navy Fleet & Family Support Center (Boot Camp For New Dads) (473-4222; greatlife-hawaii.com)
9. PARENTS (Confident Parenting Classes) (235-0488);
10. Kathy's Parenting Solutions (352-3303)
11. The Baby Hui (groups for Dads, and Moms) (735-2484; thebabyhui.org)
12. The Parent Line (Info & Referral) (526-1222; theparentline.org)
13. AUW – 211 (auw.org/211)
14. HPIRC (HI Parental Information & Resource Centers) (841-6177; hawaiiipirc.org)
15. Dept. of Ed. Family Support (PCNC; R.E.A.L.; PEI) (State office: 735-8250; sssb.k12.hi.us)
16. SPIN (Special Parent Information Network) (586-8126; spinhawaii.org)
17. Big Brothers Big Sisters (support for single dads and moms) (521-3811; bigshonolulu.org)
18. Good Beginnings Alliance (Playgroups) (531-5502; goodbeginnings.org)
19. Tutu and Me (traveling preschool for Hawaiian families) (524-7633; tutuandme.org)
20. Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center (Hawaiian families) (847-1302; qlcc.org)
21. ALU LIKE (Hawaiian families) (535-6700; alulike.org)

Religious resources: Contact your place of worship...church, temple, synagogue

Internet Resources (check on their "Links," too):

1. **mr.dad** (mrdad.com)
2. **fathers.com** (fathers.com)
3. **Nurturing Father** (nurturingfathers.com)
4. **Nat'l Fatherhood Initiative** (fatherhood.org)
5. **Boot Camp For New Dads** (newdads.com)